

VZCZCXRO0059
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK
DE RUEHMS #1345/01 2551345
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 121345Z SEP 06
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7130
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0435
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0327
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MUSCAT 001345

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/PPD, NEA/PI, AND INR/R/MR
STATE PASS USTR FOR N. MOORJANI, J. BUNTIN
LONDON FOR TSOU
PARIS FOR ZEYA
USCENTCOM FOR PLUSH
FOREIGN PRESS CENTER FOR SILAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SEPTEMBER 11 FIFTH ANNIVERSARY, ARAB LEAGUE
PEACE PROPOSAL

1. SUMMARY: Omani press gave wide (and surprisingly acerbic) coverage to the fifth anniversary of the September 11 attacks. Columnists in government-owned "Oman" suggested that 9/11 was an Israeli conspiracy and that the post-9/11 U.S. "adventure" has made the world less secure. After the recent Arab League ministerial meeting about the peace process, privately-owned "Al-Watan" wrote that Israeli invasions and the world's failure to implement UN resolutions are responsible for the current deadlock. END SUMMARY.

COVERAGE

2. Oman's Arabic dailies covered the 9/11 anniversary in different ways, but in general focused on the tragedy's uncertain legacy. On September 12, the front page of government-owned "Oman" (circulation 38,000) proclaimed, "On the Anniversary of September 11 the World Renews its Campaign against Terrorism / Zawahri Singles out the Gulf and Israel in His Threats," accompanying the headline with color image of victims' families laying flowers on a memorial pond at the World Trade Center site in New York. On September 12, private dailies "Al-Shabiba" (circulation 20,000) and "Al-Watan" (circulation 42,000) did not front-page 9/11 features, but inside carried full-page spreads with color photographs and articles about U.S. memorial ceremonies. On September 11 itself, "Oman" headlined: "Five Years since September 11, the Anniversary and the Results: Bin Laden Free and American Difficulties in Iraq and Afghanistan," over an article commenting on internal divisions among Americans concerning how to confront and prevent terrorism. Also on September 11, "Oman" carried inside-page stories headlined: "German Political Expert: America Changed after 9/11 but Not for the Better / Bush Failed in Achieving Democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Europe Works to Carry its Costs," and "The World is as Far as can be from Security -- Attacks Increased wherever Western Interests are Found." On September 11, youth-oriented "Al-Shabibah" front-paged AFP covering quoting the Secretary, "America is Now More Secure; the Search Continues for Bin Laden." The same AFP piece was carried by "Al-Watan" in tandem with MCT (former Knight-Ridder) wire coverage of 9/11's impact on U.S. civil liberties.

BLOCK QUOTES: PROBLEMS WITH ARAB LEAGUE PROPOSAL

3. On September 7, "Al-Watan" (privately owned daily, circulation 42,000) suggested a "New Mechanism to Move the Peace Process Forward":

"The ministerial council of the Arab League announced that the Arab countries are going to demand a new mechanism for resuming the Middle East peace process and define a timeframe for settling the Arab/Israeli conflict in the Security Council. However, there are a couple of facts to consider in light of that announcement: first that a new or an old "mechanism" is irrelevant to the problem at hand. Instead, we need to end Israel's continuous invasions and projects to swallow up more Arab territories, actions that are responsible for the deadlock. The second is that there is a lack of will on the part of the international community to force Israel's adherence to Security Council resolutions."

9/11 IN ISRAEL'S INTEREST

¶4. On September 11, government-owned Arabic daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) carried an an op-ed piece on "U.S.-Israeli Disagreement over Priorities in the Region:"

"There have been many efforts to drag America into a clash with confrontational groups, among them the small cell that helped plan the 9/11 operations while maintaining ties to Israeli intelligence. Although this page was closed for a while, it is considered one in lengthy chain of events that constitute Israeli efforts to draw the American machine to the Arab region... The Israelis dreamed of showing [America] as the enemy of the Arabs, so that Israel remains the only strategic partner, being able to realize all its political and strategic interests.... However, even if we discard the conspiracy theory and all Israeli technical contributions to the 9/11 operation, it would be equally true that Israel and its people in the American administration have worked hard to push America and its citizens into an open confrontation with Arabs and Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq. Washington has realized none of its interests

MUSCAT 00001345 002 OF 002

in these cases; rather, all the war's political and strategic advantages have gone to Israel. America's fighting on two fronts has given the Israelis more scope to isolate the Palestinians and work for international recognition of their security necessities as an excuse for assassinations, destruction, and arrests, along with the discarding of any peace projects for the region."

WORLD AT RISK AFTER 9/11 DUE TO "AMERICAN ADVENTURE"

¶5. Another columnist for "Oman" wrote about 9/11 as "A Day that Changed the Course of History":

"This has become a definitive date in the calendar of humanity, such that events are characterized as pre or post-9/11... Since then, Afghanistan was attacked and the Taliban was demolished as a government but not a movement. Then it was Iraq's turn, and American forces invaded the country under the pretext that it was providing support and coverage to Al Qaeda. The Americans recently discovered that the former Iraqi president did not have anything to do with Al Qaeda... but despite this discovery nobody questioned America! America's anger increased after 9/11 and brought down human societies using all the technical and military expertise available in efforts to eliminate terrorism. However, [America] could not eliminate the roots of the problem and instead complicated it. More anti-American movements appeared and extremism increased. The safety and stability of whole world is endangered because of the American adventure."

GRAPPO